

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1-22, and add claims 23-24 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:

~~charging of data reaching a network element of a communication network during a data session, the data session comprising a plurality of data flows, with each data flow being distinguishable by a set of flow parameters, the charging comprising~~

enforcing a charging policy at a the network element to be applied to ~~said data reaching the network element during a packet data protocol context, the packet data protocol context comprising a plurality of data flows, with each data flow being distinguishable by a set of flow parameters,~~ wherein said charging policy defines charging rules per flow of the plurality of flows;

observing said data reaching said network element and detecting at least one flow of data;

matching said detected flow of data to an enforced charging policy;

applying said enforced charging policy to said data flow, thereby generating charging information.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

forwarding said generated charging information to a charging system of the communication network.

3. (Currently Amended) The A-method according to claim 1, wherein the enforcing is performed upon start-up of the network element.
4. (Currently Amended) The A-method according to claim 1, wherein the enforcing is performed upon activation of the ~~data-session~~packet data protocol context.
5. (Currently Amended) The A-method according to claim 4, wherein the enforcing is performed dynamically during a life-time of the ~~data-session~~packet data protocol context.
6. (Currently Amended) The A-method according to claim 1, further comprising:
initializing data volume counters upon enforcing said charging policy.
7. (Currently Amended) The A-method according to claim 1, wherein said data flows are Internet Protocol (IP) based packet data flows, and said flow parameters comprise at least one of an IP header field, a transport header field, and an application level information.

8. (Currently Amended) The A-method according to claim 1, wherein said charging policy comprises at least one flow parameter, and at least one of a charging/accounting type, an accounting event trigger, a charging metrics, and a tariffing indication.

9. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:

~~supplying a network element with a charging policy to be enforced at said network element for charging of data reaching said network element of a communication network during a data session, the supplying comprising~~

[[-]] creating a plurality of charging policies, each charging policy of the charging policies comprising at least one flow parameter, and at least one of a charging/accounting type, an accounting event trigger, a charging metrics, and a tariffing indication,

[[-]] selecting a charging policy based on offered services and subscriber information, and

[[-]] distributing said selected charging policy to at least one network element to be enforced at said at least one network element for charging of data reaching said at least one network element during a packet data protocol context.

10. (Currently Amended) The A-method according to claim 9, wherein said charging policy is selected for a type of said network element.

11. (Currently Amended) ~~A device~~An apparatus, comprising:

an enforcing unit configured to enforce a charging policy at a network element to be applied to data reaching the network element during a packet data protocol context, the packet data protocol context comprising a plurality of data flows, with each data flow of the plurality of data flows being distinguishable by a set of flow parameters, wherein said charging policy defines charging rules per data flow of the plurality of flows;

an observation unit configured to observe said data reaching said network element and detect at least one flow of data;

a matching unit configured to match said detected flow of data to an enforced charging policy;

an application unit configured to apply said enforced charging policy to said flow;
and

a generation unit, responsive to said application unit, configured to generate charging information;

~~wherein the device is configured to charge data reaching the network element of a communication network during a data session, the data session comprising a plurality of data flows, with each data flow of the plurality of data flows being distinguishable by a set of flow parameters.~~

12. (Currently Amended) ~~A device~~The apparatus according to claim 11, further comprising:

a forwarding unit configured to forward said generated charging information to a charging system of the communication network.

13. (Currently Amended) ~~A device~~ The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein said enforcing unit is further configured to be responsive to a start-up of the network element to perform the enforcing.

14. (Currently Amended) ~~A device~~ The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein said enforcing unit is further configured to be responsive to activation of the ~~data session~~ packet data protocol context to perform the enforcing.

15. (Currently Amended) ~~A device~~ The apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said enforcing unit is further configured to dynamically ~~perform the enforcing~~ enforce during a life-time of the ~~data session~~ packet data protocol context.

16. (Currently Amended) ~~A device~~ The apparatus according to claim 11, further comprising:

an initialization unit configured to initialize data volume counters and/or time counters responsive to enforcing said charging policy.

17. (Currently Amended) ~~A device~~The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein said data flows are Internet Protocol (IP) based packet data flows, and said flow parameters comprise at least one of an IP header field, a transport header field, and an application level information.

18. (Currently Amended) ~~A device~~The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein said charging policy comprises at least one flow parameter, and at least one of a charging/accounting type, an accounting event trigger, a charging metrics, and a tariffing indication.

19. (Currently Amended) ~~A device~~An apparatus, comprising:

[[-]] a creation unit configured to create a plurality of charging policies, each charging policy of the plurality of charging policies comprising at least one flow parameter, and at least one of a charging/accounting type, an accounting event trigger, a charging metrics, and a tariffing indication;

[[-]] a selection unit configured to select a charging policy based on offered services and subscriber information; and

[[-]] a distribution unit configured to distribute said selected charging policy to at least one network element, ~~wherein the device is configured to supply the at least one network element~~ with the charging policy to be enforced at said at least one network

element for charging of data reaching said at least one network element of a communication network during a data session~~packet data protocol context~~.

20. (Currently Amended) ~~A device~~The apparatus according to claim 19, wherein said charging policy is selected for a type of said network element.

21. (Currently Amended) ~~A device~~An apparatus, comprising:

enforcing means configured to enforce a charging policy at a the network element to be applied to data reaching the network element during a packet data protocol context, the packet data protocol context comprising a plurality of data flows, with each data flow of the plurality of data flows being distinguishable by a set of flow parameters, wherein said charging policy defines charging rules per data flow of the plurality of flows;

observation means configured to observe said data reaching said network element and detect at least one flow of data;

matching means configured to match said detected flow of data to an enforced charging policy;

application means configured to apply said enforced charging policy to said flow;
and

generation means, responsive to said application means, configured to generate charging information.

22. (Currently Amended) ~~A device~~An apparatus, comprising:

creation means configured to create a plurality of charging policies, each charging policy of the plurality of charging policies comprising at least one flow parameter, and at least one of a charging/accounting type, an accounting event trigger, a charging metrics, and a tariffing indication;

selection means configured to select a charging policy based on offered services and subscriber information; and

distribution means configured to distribute said selected charging policy to at least one network element, with the charging policy to be enforced at said at least one network element for charging of data reaching said at least one network element during a packet data protocol context.

23. (New) A computer program embodied on a computer-readable medium, the computer program configured to control a processor to perform operations comprising:

enforcing a charging policy at the network element to be applied to data reaching the network element during a packet data protocol context, the packet data protocol context comprising a plurality of data flows, with each data flow being distinguishable by a set of flow parameters, wherein said charging policy defines charging rules per flow of the plurality of flows,

observing said data reaching said network element and detecting at least one flow of data,

matching said detected flow of data to an enforced charging policy, and
applying said enforced charging policy to said data flow, thereby generating
charging information.

24. (New) A computer program embodied on a computer-readable medium, the
computer program configured to control a processor to perform operations comprising:

creating a plurality of charging policies, each charging policy of the
charging policies comprising at least one flow parameter, and at least one of a
charging/accounting type, an accounting event trigger, a charging metrics, and a
tariffing indication,

selecting a charging policy based on offered services and subscriber
information, and

distributing said selected charging policy to at least one network element to
be enforced at said at least one network element for charging of data reaching said at least
one network element during a packet data protocol context.